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## Getting To Know Your Hisbodedus Practice - 017 Revealing Your Internal Simplicity

In the previous chapters, with Hashem's help, we dealt with *hisbodedus* between man and Creator, which included *emunah*, *hodayah*, *tefillah*, and *ahavas Hashem*. In the last class we explained the concept of **temimus** (wholesome simplicity) in our life in general, and how it applies specifically to *hisbodedus*.

### Temimus and Inner Child: The Longing to Be With Another

As we mentioned, the purpose of our entire avodah on this world is **hakaras metzius haBorei** - to recognize the Creator as a reality. When a person develops the power of *temimus*, he will naturally want to be "with" another, because part of *temimus* is to yearn to be with another.

As an example from our physical world, a child also wants to be with his parents, and he does not like to be alone. Just as a child wants to always be with his parents, so also there is a power in our soul for holiness to yearn to always be "with" Hashem, very much like a child.

If we reflect, we can see that part of our life is spent alone, and part of our life is spent with others; and even when we are with others, it can either be because we happen to be with others, or simply because we fear being alone and therefore we prefer to spend time around others. But although we spend a lot of time around people, much of the time spent around people does not emanate from a yearning for connection. Most people, most of the time are not experiencing connection with others on an ongoing basis.

A child doesn't only seek to be with his parents; he needs a lot of attention. He wants connection; he wants to feel that his parents are with him, and it is not enough for the child to know that he is with his parents. Of course, a child cannot express this, but the nature of a child is that he always seeks connection with another. A child does not like to be alone; he always wants to be around another. Not only does he want to physically be with others, but he demands emotional connection with others all the time. This is a yearning that comes from the soul, and it is very dominant in a child.

All of us have this yearning, but it is often covered over, now that we have gotten older. We have learned how to be on our own, more or less, and we can survive being alone; we don't feel a need to always be with others. When a child is in his younger years, he needs a constant friend, but as he gets older, he feels less and less of a need to be with others so much. He learns how to be by himself, and even when he is with others, his connection to others is superficial and purely external, because he doesn't feel that much of a need to connect. This is the natural course a person takes. But deep inside

us, there is still an inner child in us that seeks connection all the time with another, and it has merely become covered during the course of time.

A person grows up knowing that the purpose of life is to recognize Hashem, but he is used to being alone as well as not being connected with others. What happens? Even if he does *hisbodedus* and he uncovers his inner “alone”, his connection to Hashem is only revealed when he does *hisbodedus*, but during the rest of the day, a person does not feel a need to be connected with Hashem, just like a couple feels connection to each other only when they are around each other and not throughout the day.

*Hisbodedus* is not the same kind of connection you have with people. It is no less than how a child needs to connect with his parents. Just as a child wants to always be with his parents, so does true *hisbodedus* cause you to feel a constant longing for Hashem, when you do *hisbodedus* from an inner place in yourself. Therefore, *hisbodedus* is not just the time in which you connect with Hashem; it can cause you to feel connected to Hashem all the time, and not just during “*hisbodedus* time.”

So when you do *hisbodedus*, it is imperative that you access your inner child again. That is the inner and true way to do *hisbodedus*. Reach a place in yourself in which you feel that you want to connect Hashem all the time and not just during *hisbodedus* time.

#### **Four Methods of Reaching Your Temimus**

[There are four methods to reach one’s temimus. The first two methods are an external way, and the last two methods are an inner way.

##### **1) Reaching Temimus by the External Method of Returning To Your Inner Child**

The external method is a commonly used approach which has several applications [which was mentioned in the previous chapter]: You return to your childhood, through your memory, or through looking at pictures or videos of yourself; you use your imagination/memory to return to your childhood experiences. But don’t just remember it superficially; it should be a soul experience. You can return to your childhood in your soul. When you imagine yourself being a child, your *temimus* is awakened.

However, this method contains pros and cons. The benefit is that it’s easier for you to identify with your childhood experiences so it can affect you even in the here and now. But the negative side of this method is that when you go back to your childhood, you might become a little kid again, with all your childish mischief. Also, when you remember your childhood, you naturally think about how you got along with your parents and how you trusted them, and this takes away your concentration from thinking about Hashem. Therefore, when such thoughts are awakened, you need to know how to redirect this towards your relationship with Hashem.

There is also a stronger point to consider. If a person didn’t get along with his parents when he was a child, or if he suffered negative experiences from them, his *temimus* was damaged. This isn’t the case in every Jewish home, *Baruch Hashem*; but there are definitely children who had negative childhood experiences with their parents, and therefore, the *temimus* of such a child has taken a hit while he was still developing.

For example, if a child woke up in middle of the night with a nightmare, and he woke up his parents to soothe him, and the parents didn’t have the patience to deal with him, this is a negative childhood experience which has been absorbed deeply into the child’s subconscious. A child’s mind is not fully mature to understand what he is experiencing, but deep in his subconscious, there is a trauma from the experience, and it tells him that his parents had no patience for him.

Therefore, returning to your childhood experiences is not always a preferred method to access your

*temimus*, because there are some bad memories that can come with it.

## 2) Reaching Temimus by the Inner Awakening of your Temimus in The Present

The second method to access your *temimus* is the more inner and preferred approach, but it is harder to use. One can awaken his *temimus* which he has in the present point in his life. A person can directly use the power of *temimus* in the soul, even without getting involved with the “inner child”.

When you were a child, you used your *temimus* towards your parents. You don't need to use your imagination or your memory of your childhood to reach your actual power of *temimus*; you just need to access it as it is right now. Maybe you are already using your *temimus* right now towards others in your life. You need to use that very power of *temimus* in yourself which you recognize from the current stage in your life, and instead channel it towards how you relate to Hashem.

This power of *temimus* is the root power in a Jew's soul. Yaakov Avinu was called “*ish tam*”. This is the inner and pure kind of *temimus*.

The first kind of *temimus* we mentioned, which is the power of the “inner child”, is a power that gentiles as well can access, and indeed, there are gentiles who know how to tap into their inner child. There are Jews too who are using this external approach and are being helped - and they are using it in the exact way that a gentile uses it...

But the inner kind of *temimus*, which is to access it directly (without getting involved with the “inner child”), is a power that only a Jew has in his soul. Of this *temimus* it is written, “Be **tamim** (wholesome) with Hashem your G-d.”

We can make use of external *temimus* too (inner child), but we need to mainly use the **inner** kind of *temimus* [which we will soon explain how to access]. We have explained with Heaven's help how to bring out the potential of our power of *temimus*. It is the strongest power we need to make use of in order to reach true *hisbodedus* between ourselves and the Creator. It is not only a power we use during *hisbodedus* - it is an ability which we can use all the time and all day. Now we will discuss how we can bring out the inner kind of *temimus*, unique only to a Jew's soul.

We mentioned that a child doesn't like to be alone, therefore, he seeks connection with others. This is because a child doesn't have *seichel*, a developed intellect, so he is missing the power to guide himself when he is alone. With a developed intellect, we can take care of ourselves and tolerate being alone, more or less. But without the power of the *seichel*/intellect, a person does not have the inner strength to guide himself, and that is why he feels dependent on others for guidance. Thus, a child is very dependent on others, because he has no developed intellect yet and thus he fears being alone.

A child has no *seichel* or *daas*, so he can't guide himself, and that is why his *temimus* is dominant; he is thus dependent on others for guidance. So *temimus* is a power to feel dependent on another for guidance. When a person gets older and he matures, he is often self-confident and feels that he can guide himself using his intellect. If so, how can a mature adult connect to the concept of *temimus*? This point leads us to the secret and depth about our entire life.

Although it seems that we have our *daas* (thinking, intellectual mind) and that we're dictating all our movements, the truth is that all of our movements are only being allowed by Hashem, and He is above all our understanding. Therefore, even if I think I understand my movements, I can tell myself that I really don't comprehend this at all, because I am being entirely guided by Hashem. True, we have free will to choose what we will do, but we are still not in control of moving ourselves - it is Hashem who lets anything happen. Since Hashem is above my comprehension I can't even understand my simple movements.

This process of reflecting enables a person to leave his *daas* and enter his *temimus*.

When a person lives with a superficial perspective, when he views how others are moving, he thinks they are controlling how they move, and that he is controlling his movements as well. For example, he sees everyone getting on the bus and crossing the street, and he does the same, so doesn't it seem that we are in control of our movement? A person thinks, "Sure, Hashem runs the world, but in the end of the day, it seems like we're in charge of our actual movements."

But a person who lives with an inner perspective towards life knows that all movements are but a garment of Hashem's movements. And since that is the truth, we can tell ourselves that since we have no comprehension of Hashem, we have no comprehension either of the simple movements we see. This is a very deep kind of recognition. "*Hashem is the Creator and Conductor of all creations, and only He does, did, and will do, every action.*"

This kind of awareness changes one's perspective towards life entirely; it's a new world that one uncovers. It is a kind of life in which you surrender yourself to Hashem and you let Him guide you. This is the depth of using the power of *temimus*.

We explained two ways how to reach *temimus*.

The first way is to return to your childhood experiences, but as we mentioned, it is a superficial method which hamper your own *temimus* in the process. This method is a power in every soul, both Jew and gentile alike.

The second method is the inner method, the power of *temimus* in a Jew's soul, in which one can use his *temimus* towards Hashem, realizing that he is totally reliant on Hashem.

### **3) Reaching Temimus by Reviewing Pesukim About Temimus**

There is also a third way to use *temimus*, and in a way it will come easier to someone who possess both strong intellect and feeling: take *pesukim* (verses) of *Tehillim* (Psalms) which describe *temimus* and review them, with enthusiasm. Keep reviewing them, with enthusiasm and with depth, and you can do it for 100 and even 1000 times, until your *temimus* begins to come out of your heart. Be very concentrated and focused with your entire being as you do it.

### **4) Reaching Temimus by Reading Stories of Gedolim**

A fourth method which can reveal your *temimus* is by reading stories of our Gedolim which exemplify *temimus*.

### **In Conclusion**

We have explained here four methods how to reach *temimus*. If a person merits reaching his *temimus*, he will naturally relate to Hashem as very real, and his *hisbodedus* will feel much more truthful. He can then build then upon that, with the stages that we will later describe (with the help of Hashem). But this current step we are describing, *temimus*, is a major step in the *hisbodedus* process.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH THE RAV**

Can the Rav give a few examples of how we can feel like a "tamim" [\[1\]](#) towards Hashem and realize that He's in control of everything?

A: We are in a world being dominated by attacks from all kinds of forces, such as Islamic extremists, wicked people who are constantly contemplating ways of how to kill. If one tries to think logically of

what causes terrorism, either he'll conclude that it's Arabs from Syria or from Iran, or from some other place in the world. But you can realize that they are all messengers of Hashem, and Hashem is using them to carry out His will – it is really not possible to handle them using our puny human logic. Hashem is leading them, and this is above the understanding of our human intellect.

The wisest people in the world perhaps can wonder of how to deal with them, but do they know what's enabling them to act? No, because it is Hashem Himself who is letting them act. The wise people in the world can try to think and think of what to do about them, but Hashem lets them act as He wills, and all of their rationalizations are for naught.

A person can see that all that he does understand is but a drop of understanding in the incomprehensible. We don't even understand the tiniest detail of Hashem's ways. Reb Noach of Kobrin zt"l said that without emunah, it's not possible to leave the house, and with emunah, one can conquer everything. Most people though are leaving their homes each day without emunah, out of immaturity towards life. But when a person has true understanding, and he thinks, he can see how the entire world is being led by Hashem, and that we have no comprehension of anything, and we can't predict even the next moment. So how do we survive in this world? Only through using the depth of the power *temimus*<sup>[2]</sup>!

If a person has emunah, can he understand terrorism today?

A: There is some small amount of comprehension we can have in Hashem's ways, but to know all of His ways is above our understanding.

If a person has emunah, will he be protected from the terrorism of today?

A: The Rambam<sup>[3]</sup> says in Moreh Nevuchim that a person will receive individual protection by Hashem the more emunah he has. The more a person has emunah, the more he can prevent the forces of evil from breaking loose upon this world. We can't stop it totally, because Hashem has His ways that we don't understand, but yes, to a certain extent, we can definitely lessen the terrorism in this world by strengthening our emunah.

Are there things today we are doing which prevent us from having *temimus*?

A: All that we see with our physical eyes can take away our *temimus*. For example, you see your house, and you naturally think that some contractor built it. You get used to thinking that people do everything in this world. When a person reads and hears the news all the time and he keeps hearing/reading the opinions of other people, how each person understands things, and this makes us think that people are in charge of this world. It is the opposite of *emunah* which is to believe that Hashem runs the world, and the only thing which we can do is to use our power of free will. All of the news outlets – secular media, Jewish newspapers, and even the most Chareidi newspapers contain outright heresy. They all are indicating that people run the world. The more a person lives a life of *temimus*, the more he views the world through different lenses. He is aware that whenever a person does something, he is merely a messenger of Hashem. But when we get used to reading [or hearing] the news on a set basis, we get used to thinking that people run this world which is the opposite of a *temimus* kind of life. If someone can hear the news all the time and tell himself that Hashem is running the world even after all that he hears, then it would be a point open for discussion. But if a person regularly listens to the news, he probably isn't reacting that way, and it gets a person used to heresy on a regular basis!

How can a person feel how Hashem is doing everything when we feel all the time that we live in the real world and that it is we who do everything?

A: This is a very good question. I have to do what I need to do, but after I do what I do, I must tell myself that it's not up to me, and that only Hashem does everything and let everything happen. On a more subtle note, this deep awareness can also bring one to *bittul* (self-nullification) and humility

towards Hashem.

*How can we feel calm and that Hashem is doing everything when there are so many troubles surrounding us?*

A: This question goes against all our *emunah*. The Kotzker Rebbe zt"l said, "If I could understand Hashem, I would not want Him to be my God." We do not understand Hashem or His ways. We do not understand His good ways and surely when He has to inflict pain upon us we don't understand.<sup>[4]</sup> There is a little we do comprehend but for the most part, we don't comprehend His ways, so we must not question Him.

*What can I do to actually calm myself down, in the meantime?*

A: When you truly believe that Hashem is doing it all, then you will be calmed. On the contrary, if you believe that "this bad person" did this and "that bad person" did this, then indeed, everything seems bad. But tell yourself that no one is running this world but Hashem Who is endlessly merciful - all that He does is good. If you truly come to feel that Hashem is really doing everything in this world, not people, you will be calmed which is the depth of using your *temimus*. Perhaps one can try to "explain" the troubles we face today as an "atonement for our sins" or because "Moshiach is coming", etc.. However, the way of our *emunah* is to simply believe that Hashem is behind it all, therefore all is good.

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<sup>[1]</sup> For a definition of *temimus* see [Bilvavi Part 4 - Chapter 09 Temimus = Simplicity](#) <sup>[1]</sup> and [Melave Malka- A New Meal](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

**[2] Editor's Note:** *Temimus* is the subject of many talks of the Rav shlit"a. An entire sefer, [Bilvavi Part 9](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, was written devoted to this deep concept and bring it closer to our hearts. It is also discussed in [Bilvavi Part 2 Chapter 28](#) <sup>[4]</sup>, [Bilvavi Part 4 Chapters 9-11](#) <sup>[5]</sup> and [Bilvavi Part 5 - Author's Introduction](#) <sup>[6]</sup>.

**[3]** see Moreh Nevuchim**[3]**: Chapters 51-53

**[4]** See [Tefillah 075](#) <sup>[7]</sup> for an in-depth analysis of suffering.

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#### Links

<sup>[1]</sup> <http://www.bilvavi.net/english/bilvavi-part-4-chapter-09-temimus-simplicity>

<sup>[2]</sup> <http://www.bilvavi.net/english/melave-malka-002-new-meal>

<sup>[3]</sup> <http://www.bilvavi.net/sugya/bilvavi.tes>

<sup>[4]</sup> <http://www.bilvavi.net/english/bilvavi-part-2-chapter-28-simplicity>

<sup>[5]</sup> <http://www.bilvavi.net/sugya/bilvavi.dalet>

<sup>[6]</sup> <http://www.bilvavi.net/english/bilvavi-part-5-001-authors-intro>

<sup>[7]</sup> <http://www.bilvavi.net/english/tefillah-075-how-view-sickness-and-suffering>